
Courtesy: House Energy and Commerce Committee

Providing Relief for Low Income Americans This Winter

As the winter months approach, no one should be forced to choose between heating their home and feeding their family. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have wreaked havoc on the gulf coast and have also dramatically increased energy prices across the nation. House Republicans are planning to provide an additional \$1 billion in LIHEAP funding to ensure that low-income Americans enrolled in the program have at least the same level of purchasing power as last year.

What is LIHEAP?

- The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a Federally-funded program that helps low-income households with their home energy bills.
- LIHEAP can help people stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer. By doing so, they can reduce the risk of health and safety problems (such as illness, fire, or eviction).
- The LIHEAP program can offer low income Americans one or more of the following types of assistance:
 - Bill payment assistance;
 - Energy crisis assistance; and,
 - Weatherization and energy-related home repairs.

Home Heating Aid

- LIHEAP will receive a \$1 billion increase, 50 percent over its FY 2005 level in the Deficit Reduction Act.
- Recently the Energy Information Administration forecast a sharp increase in home heating costs for the upcoming winter.
- Specifically, the agency predicted:
 - Natural gas households, on average, will spend \$350 (48 percent) more;
 - Heating oil households, on average, will spend \$378 (32 percent) more; and,
 - Propane households, on average, will spend \$325 (30 percent) more.

What Do Constituents Need to Apply

- Recent copies of utility bills;
- A recent payroll stub or other proof that shows current gross income;
- Documentation showing income from Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, Pension Funds, disability, etc.;
- Final Utility Termination Notice;
- Proof of present address;
- Proof of total members living in household;
- Social Security cards (or numbers) for all persons living in household; and,
- Proof of U.S. citizenship or permanent residence.